

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 498  
By McNally

A RESOLUTION To honor the pilots, flight crews and passengers on U.S. commercial airline flights who have resisted efforts to hijack their flights and other dangerous and criminal behavior.

WHEREAS, Our nation has been well served by its commercial passenger air transportation industry, which has for several decades contributed to the efficient movement of people across this nation and the world for both business and personal purposes; and

WHEREAS, In the past few decades, various extremist groups have sought to hijack commercial flights for the advancement of their agendas through either blackmail or violence; and

WHEREAS, On September 11, 2001 in the worst event in commercial aviation history, militant religious extremists hijacked four commercial airliners, crashing two into the twin towers of the World Trade Center in lower Manhattan in New York City and one into the Pentagon; and

WHEREAS, Hijackers did not succeed in fulfilling their evil aims on the fourth airliner, United Airlines Flight 93 out of Newark and headed for San Francisco; the passengers, upon realizing that their flight had been seized, contacted family members and others by cell phone and learned of the fate of the other planes; and

WHEREAS, Those of the 38 passengers and the flight crew who were not incapacitated resolved among themselves not to submit to the terrorists' aims without resistance; among the passengers who successfully placed calls were Todd Beamer, an Oracle, Inc. executive from Hightown, New Jersey, who contacted Lisa D. Jefferson, a GTE supervisor; Jeffrey Glick, a sales manager from a technology firm, Thomas Burnett, Jr., a California businessman, and Mark Bingham a former college rugby player from California; and

WHEREAS, Todd Beamer, upon being informed by Lisa Jefferson of the fate of the other flights, and, in turn, passing on to her what he knew of the hijackers and their methods, and having discussed their options with the other passengers and the surviving crew members, resolved to first jump the hijacker wearing what appeared to be a bomb; Jefferson then heard shouts and commotion, then was asked by Beamer to pray with him and to call his family later; and

WHEREAS, The last words heard by Lisa Jefferson were Beamer saying "Lets roll."; while we can never know exactly what happened, Flight 93 never reached the hijackers' apparent intended target in Washington, D.C.; the United Airlines plane crashed near Stoneycreek, Somerset County, Pennsylvania, about 80 miles southeast of Pittsburgh; and

WHEREAS, Although the passengers and crew of Flight 93 did not survive, their courage and heroic action undoubtedly saved the lives of hundreds or possible thousands on the ground; their valor and determination to resist the evil intent of their captors raised the spirits of all Americans during one of the most tragic days in our national history; and

WHEREAS, The example set by the brave passengers and crew of United Airlines Flight 93 will serve as an inspiration for their fellow citizens and indeed the people of the entire free world; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED SECOND GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, That we hereby honor the courageous pilots, flight crews and passengers of U.S. commercial airline flights who have risked personal safety and who have on occasion given

their lives to resist terrorist and other criminal actions; we further specifically honor the pilot, flight crew and passengers of United Airlines Flight 93 who, on September 11, 2001, bravely gave their lives to preserve their country from an even greater loss of life.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this General Assembly requests that suitable plaques be erected in a prominent place in each of this State's major airports at Memphis, Nashville, Chattanooga, Knoxville and Tri-Cities be requested to erect suitable plaques in appropriate suitable locations to commemorate the heroic actions of all pilots, flight crews and passengers of U.S. commercial flights who have risked all to keep our skies free.